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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 MCT-01 ACDA-12 USPS-01 LAB-04 SIL-01
OES-07 HA-05 /101 W
----------041136 302035Z /50
R 301505Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7830
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS VALLETTA 1499

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, MT
SUBJECT: MALTA STUNNED BY LETTER-BOMB INCIDENT

1. A 15 YEAR OLD SCHOOL GIRL WAS KILLED AND HER NINE YEAR OLD BROTHER INJURED ON DECEMBER 28 WHEN THEY OPENED A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THEIR FATHER, DR. EDWIN GRECH. GRECH RETURNED TO MALTA FROM ABROAD LAST SUMMER TO WORK AT THE GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL AFTER THE GOM HAD APPEALED TO MALTESE M.D.S WORKING ABROAD TO RETURN IN THE WAKE OF THE DOCTOR'S STRIKE. DR. CHETCUTI-CARUANA, A MEDICAL DOCTOR AND LABOR MP, ALSO RECEIVED A LETTER BOMB THE SAME DAY BUT IT FAILED TO EXPLODE WHEN HE OPENED IT.

2. THE GOM ISSUED A STATEMENT DECEMBER 28 CONDEMNING THE ACTS AND CLAIMED THAT "LOGIC DOES NOT SHOW ANY OTHER MOTIVE FOR THESE TERRORIST ATTACKS THAN THE RESULT OF DOCTOR'S STRIKE, WHICH IS BEING HELD UNDER THE PROTECTION AND WITH THE HELP OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION AND THE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF MALTA." THE STATEMENT WENT ON TO STRESS THAT THE GOM WOULD NOT BE INTIMIDATED BY
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SUCH ACTS AND TO REASSURE THE PUBLIC THAT ALL POSSIBLE STEPS ARE BEIGN TAKEN TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE "AGAINST SUCH FASCIST ACTS." THE STATEMENT ALSO SAID THAT THE GOM "WAS NOT CONVINCED" BY THE MAM'S STATEMENT CONDEMNING TERRORIST ACTS AND WAS NOT PREPARED TO MEET WITH ANYONE TO DISCUSS THE DOCTOR'S DISPUTE UNTIL THE PERSON OR PERSONS RESPONSIBLE WERE CAUGHT.

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3. THE BUREAU OF THE MALTA LABOR PARTY ALSO ISSUED A STATEMENT CONDEMNING THE LETTER BOMB ATTACKS AND EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN THAT "THE WAY THIS NEW VIOLENCE WAS PLANNED AND EXECUTED COULD INDICATE THAT THERE WAS SOME CONNECTION WITH FOREIGN TERRORISTS." THIS THEME HAS BEEN EMPHASIZED IN THE PRO-MLP PRESS.

4. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING THE NATIONALIST PARTY AND MAM (SEE ABOVE) HAVE PUBLISHED STATEMENTS DEPLORING THESE INCIDENTS AND THE MAJOR NEWSPAPERS HAVE EDITORIALIZED AGAINST TERRORISM. THE GOM, PRIVATE CONCERNS AND FOREIGN EMBASSIES FLEW THEIR FLAGS AT HALF MAST DECEMBER 29 AND THE PRESIDENT, DR. BUTTIGIEG, CALLED ON DR. GRECH TO CONVEY THE CONDOLENCES OF THE PEOPLE OF MALTA. THE FUNERAL OF MISS GRECH WILL BE HELD DECEMBER 31.

5. COMMENT: THESE TWO INCIDENTS HAVE DEEPLY SHAKEN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND WILL SEVERELY HAMPER ATTEMPTS TO RESOLVE THE DOCTOR'S STRIKE. DR. GRECH WAS VERY UNPOPULAR AMONG HIS MEDICAL COLLEAGUES FOR RETURNING TO MALTA TO ACCEPT A POSITION WITH THE GOVERNMENT AFTER THE STRIKE STARTED, WHICH HAS CAUSED A WIDESPREAD SUSPICION AMONG GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS THAT THE MAM MAY SOMEHOW BE BEHIND THIS INCIDENT. ON THE OTHER HAND IT SEEMS VERY HARD TO BELIEVE THAT MEDICAL DOCTORS WOULD INDULGE IN SUCH TACTICS.
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THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT SENT THREE BOMB EXPERTS DECEMBER 29 TO ASSIST IN THE INVESTIGATION. LAINGEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
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Executive Order: N/A
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 133990
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MALTA STUNNED BY LETTER-BOMB INCIDENT
TAGS: PINS, MT
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/39760efd-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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